



Internal Assessment Policy and Procedure

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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide a rigorous, fair and equitable operational framework for the assessment of learning and to ensure that assessment instruments are appropriate to the national standards defined within each qualification.

2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 West Lothian College will ensure that the arrangements for and conduct of internal assessment meet the requirements of the appropriate awarding body.

3.0 Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Assistant Principal is responsible for the management and implementation of the policy.
- 3.2 The Head of Quality and Learner Services is responsible for monitoring the application and maintenance of this policy.
- 3.3 Centre Managers are responsible for implementing the policy and ensuring that assessment standards meet those specified by the awarding body.
- 3.4 All College staff are responsible for ensuring that students are fully supported in the assessment process.
- 3.5 Centre Managers are responsible for monitoring the quality of induction and support procedures for assessors.
- 3.6 Centre Managers, through action or delegation, are responsible for ensuring that instruments of assessment used are valid, fair, reliable and have been internally and/or externally prior verified.
- 3.7 Centre Managers, through action or delegation, are responsible for ensuring that assessment arrangements, particularly for each SVQ and Graded Unit, are implemented in accordance with the awarding body requirements.
- 3.8 Individual lecturers are responsible for completing and updating the Delivery and Assessment Arrangements (D&AA) forms and the supporting Control Files.
- 3.9 Centre Managers, through action or delegation, are responsible for ensuring that all assessment materials, paper-based and electronic, are stored in a secure location and accessed in accordance with awarding body guidelines.

- 3.10 Individual lecturers/assessors are responsible for ensuring assessment conditions and instruments of assessment meet awarding body requirements, and individual student needs.
- 3.11 Lecturers/Assessors are responsible for applying relevant health, safety and environmental protection procedures, as well as equality and access criteria, when carrying out assessments.
- 3.12 Centre Managers, through action or delegation are responsible, at induction stage and throughout the course, for ensuring learner awareness and understanding of:
- what constitutes plagiarism, collusion and or cheating;
 - the associated penalties for academic misconduct;
 - the requirement for learners to evidence original work through a signed declaration confirming own work and reference sources
- 3.13 The Access and Support Service Leader is responsible for liaising with and advising Centre Managers, lecturers/assessors and the MIS staff of any special assessment arrangements required to meet the needs of learners with additional assessment support needs.
- 3.14 Centre Managers are responsible for ensuring that completed assessment evidence is retained in accordance with Awarding Body guidelines.

4.0 Procedure for Internal Assessment

- 4.1 E-assessment procedures will be subject to the same conditions for all instruments of assessment, unless otherwise stated by the awarding body.
- 4.2 National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials, where available, will be used for National Qualifications (NQ) Units. There is no requirement to prior verify these materials as they have been devised and vetted at national level. Individual lecturers and assessors will, however, require to be familiar with the content so that arrangements are applied correctly.
- 4.3 NAB assessment materials can only be altered in accordance with the criteria specified in the NAB pack (e.g. for contextualisation purposes) or with prior permission from SQA. Any proposed amendments or alterations to NABs will be internally verified before submission to SQA for external prior verification.
- 4.4 Higher National exemplar assessment instruments, where available, can be used for Higher National Qualifications. There is now a requirement to internally prior verify these materials, although they have been devised and vetted at national level. Individual lecturers and assessors are responsible for familiarising themselves with the content so that arrangements are applied correctly.

- 4.5 Higher National exemplar assessment instruments can only be altered to clarify ambiguity without altering the level of competence assessed. Any proposed amendments or alterations to exemplar assessments will require to be internally verified before submission to SQA for prior verification.
- 4.6 NAB assessment instruments, exemplar assessments and e-summative assessment instrument will **not** be used for any other purposes.
- 4.7 Assessment instruments and materials developed for HN Graded Units will be forwarded to SQA for prior verification before the published cut-off date.
- 4.8 A minimum of two instruments of assessment will be developed for each assessment to provide opportunities for re-assessment. There may be exceptions to this where an assessment is project-based.
- 4.9 Clear grade criteria will be developed and verified for all Graded Units and relevant HN Units to ensure consistency in grading. A breakdown of the allocation of marks will be produced to assist assessors and for internal and external verification purposes.
- 4.10 Centre Heads, through action or delegation, will ensure that appropriate assessment plans/schedules will be agreed by the course team and reviewed on an ongoing basis and that programme and individual unit assessment plans/schedules are communicated to learners at the start of a course and also at the start of delivery of each unit. Learners will be given reasonable notice of an assessment and will be given full information on assessment conditions, as agreed by the Course Team.
- 4.11 Internally verified assessment instruments and related materials will be stored in Unit Control Files and held in a secure location. Control files will be subject to review and update as part of internal verification activity but assessment instruments should be prior verified before each new delivery.
- 4.12 Extension to assessment submission dates beyond the period of result date for the unit will only be granted when the learner submits an appeal in writing and the reason is accepted as valid by the course team.
- 4.13 For the purposes of verification, all units as part of a course award or as a free standing unit should be held until three weeks after their completion date, unless SQA inform the college of an EV visit. In this instance, the external verifiers will determine how much evidence assessors will need to hold for the purposes of the visit.

Graded unit evidence must be held until three weeks after the course award completion date.

- 4.14 Assessment evidence for internal units which are components of a course with an external exam element will be retained until after the external results are published and the period for any appeals has lapsed, i.e. September of the same year.
- 4.15 Assessment records for SVQs and NVQs will be retained for a minimum of three years after completion of the award. Assessment records relate to candidate achievement checklists and internal verification records.

5.0 Assessment Decisions and Feedback

- 5.1 It is the responsibility of the Course Team to ensure an assessment scheme, e.g. solutions, sample responses, checklists and other guidelines, is available and prior verified with the instruments of assessments. Individual lecturers are responsible for ensuring these are available in the relevant Control File to assist judgements by assessors, internal verifier(s) and external verifier(s).
- 5.2 Learners will be informed that all assessment decisions are provisional and are subject to internal and external verification. This will be explained during course and unit inductions.
- 5.3 Assessments will be marked in accordance with the assessment criteria detailed in the Control File.
- 5.4 Learners will be provided with meaningful feedback, written or in an appropriate form, to meet needs on individual assessment performance and given advice on progress and next steps. Feedback will be given to the learner within an appropriate timescale – no more than ten working days.
- 5.5 Recommendations for Grades in Higher National Units will be presented for approval by course teams, internal verifiers and external verifiers.

6.0 Re-Assessment

- 6.1 Where learners have been unsuccessful in demonstrating their attainment of skills and knowledge or competence, they will be re-assessed.
- 6.2 Learners will normally be allowed one re-assessment. This will be carried out before the completion date of the unit.
- 6.3 A second re-assessment may be allowed, at the discretion of the course team, where the learner has been absent through illness and is supported by a medical certificate (not self-certification) or

Mitigating Circumstances form. This decision will be recorded for monitoring purposes.

- 6.4 The Course Team may, by exception, give consideration to a written request for a second re-assessment from a learner who is not supported by a medical certificate or Mitigating Circumstances form. If a request for a second re-assessment is approved by the team, this will be carried out on payment of the current re-assessment fee to the Finance service at the College.
- 6.5 In SQA National Qualifications, up to and including Advanced Higher and HN Graded Units, learners will **not** be encouraged to seek re-assessment in order to improve grades.
- 6.7 Arrangements and conditions specific to the re-assessment of individual Units will be detailed in the relevant Control File.

7.0 Assessment Appeals

- 7.1 A learner can appeal against an internal assessment decision through the Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure.

8.0 Recognition of Prior Learning

Any learner who is enrolled as a college student can request recognition for achievement through a number of processes. This may be to gain informal recognition for purposes of access to the appropriate level of unit or course, or to gain formal recognition for purposes of certification by an awarding body. The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework will be used, where appropriate, for levelling purposes.

- 8.1 Assessment on Demand (AOD) is where a learner chooses to be assessed, either internally or externally, without having undertaken a course of study or additional learning.
- 8.2 Credit Transfer (CT) is the process by which a learner is recognised as having achieved the standards required for certification based on a previous qualification awarded by the same or a different awarding body.
- 8.3 Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) is the process by which a learner presents a portfolio of evidence or demonstrates skills and knowledge to support a claim for formal or informal recognition. For formal recognition the accumulated evidence will usually come from a range of sources, and must meet the appropriate level of knowledge, skills and understanding required by the awarding body.
- 8.4 The lecturer is responsible for agreeing the arrangements for these processes with the course team and/or Centre Manager, and ensuring that the awarding body requirements are met.

- 8.5 An individual who is not an enrolled student can request AOD, CT or APL. However, the individual must become an enrolled student before formal processes can be started.
- 8.6 The relevant Centre Manager will ensure that assessment evidence from formal AOD, CT and APL processes is verified in accordance with internal verification procedures.

9.0 Academic Misconduct and Malpractice

- 9.1 A learner who attempts to gain an award by fraudulent means will automatically have the results held pending an investigation by the Centre Manager.
- 9.2 The outcome of the investigation will determine the appropriate course of action to be taken by the College and ensure that the reliability of the assessment process is protected.
- 9.3 Malpractice is a breach of College rules and may invoke the Student Positive Behaviour and Discipline Procedure.
- 9.4 Disciplinary procedures will apply to any person involved in an intention to deceive. For clarity, this means any learner who allows a fellow student to copy part, or all of his/her work, will be subject to similar penalties as the learner who plagiarised.

10.0 Certification

- 10.1 Certification to confirm the achievement of a recognised qualification or unit of learning can only be issued by the relevant awarding body.
- 10.2 College certificates for non-awarding body provision may be issued on the recommendation of the Centre Manager and with the approval of the Principal.
- 10.3 All college certificates will be signed by the Principal.

11.0 Communication of Policy to Learners

Learners will be informed of the Assessment Policy during Induction and by the lecturers/assessors as part of preparation for assessment.

12.0 Documentation

Learner Assessment Feedback Proforma (developed by each sector)

Achievement Checklists (see relevant Control File)
Result Sheet (generated by MIS)

13.0 This policy should be read in conjunction with the undernoted:

Internal Verification Policy and Procedure
Assessment Appeals Policy and Procedure
SQA's Quality Assurance Framework: A Guide for Centres
SQA Guidelines for assessment and verification of Group Award Graded
Units

13.0 Evaluation and Review

Next scheduled review date: March 2018